

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

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AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT
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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PBOR, PINT, SS, MO, MR, AG.
SUBJECT: FONMIN BOUCETTA INTERVIEWS ON THE AHARA, MAURITANIA

1. LOCAL PRESS PUBLISHED AUGUST 19 EXCERPTS FROM RECENT
INTERVIEWS GIVEN BY FONMIN BOUCETTA TO LONDON DAILIES
THE FINANCIAL TIMES AND OBSERVER. SIGNIFICANT STATEMENTS
WERE MADE ON THE SAHARA QUESTION AND ON EVENTS IN MAURI-
TANIA. HIGHLIGHTS FOLLOW.

2. SAHARA.
--MOROCCO APPROVED FRANCE'S RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN
"MEDIATION" EFFORTS.

--IN ANY NEGOTIATION, MOROCCO WOULD SEEK REGIONAL
(I.E. MAGHREB) SOLUTION TO TENSIONS. SECONDLY, IT WOULD
NEVER CEDE ANY TERRITORY (I.E., ITS PART OF THE SAHARA).

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--NO REFERENDUM IN THE SAHARA WAS POSSIBLE. HOW COULD
ONE CONSULT WITH ONLY 75 THOUSAND INHABITANTS (OF WHOM ONLY
20-22,000 WERE VOTERS) IN A TERRITORY OF 260,000 SQUARE KMS?
IT IS NOT PRACTICAL.
BESIDES CONSULTATIONS HAD ALREADY OCCURRED BY "VARIOUS
METHODS." THE JEMAA COULD BE "RECONSULTED" IF DESIRED.

--OAU WISEMEN'S COMMITTEE--OR ANY OTHER ORGANIZATION--
COULD VISIT SAHARA TO TAKE ACCOUNT WILL AND SENTIMENT
OF PEOPLE IN THE REGION.

3. MAURITANIA.

--MAURITANIA WAS SOVEREIGN COUNTRY, BUT ANY
TERRITORIAL CHANGES OR CONTACTS IN REGION MUST TAKE NOTE
OF "OVERRIDING" IMPORTANCE OF MOROCCO'S SECURITY AND ITS
INTENTION TO DEFEND ITS SECURITY.

--MOROCCO'S RELATIONS WITH MAURITANIA WERE "PRIVILEGED"
AND BOUCETTA "UNAWARE" OF ANY "FUNDAMENTAL CHANGES" IN
MAURITANIA'S ATTITUDE TOWARD ITS TREATIES WITH MOROCCO.

4. ALGERIA

--BOUCETTA HAD TO AGREE THAT "FACTS SUPPORTED" LOCAL
PAPER'S CHARACTERIZATION OF ALGERIA'S DIPLOMATIC INITIA-
TIVES AS A "MANEUVER."

--THERE WAS OUTSTANDING BORDER DIFFERENCE WITH ALGERIA.
ALGERIA'S SIGNING OF CONTRACT WITH AMERICAN FIRM TO EXPLOIT
GARA DJEBILAT IRON WAS "UNILATERAL" AND WOULD NOT BE
LONG-LIVED.

5. COMMUNISM

--IF MOROCCO WERE CUT OFF FROM AFRICA AND MAURITANIA
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IT WOULD BE ISOLATED. IF COMMUNISM WERE IMPLANTED TO THE
SOUTH IT WOULD MEAN MOROCCO'S ISOLATION AND THUS
CONSTITUTE A DANGER TO ITS SECURITY.MOFFAT

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